

Chapter 4: Personnel

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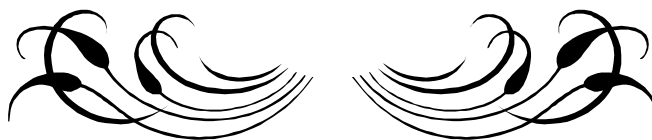
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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to provide an optimal learning environment, it is imperative that administrators, parents, community leaders, and board members be aware of the relationships among access to information resources, staffing patterns, teaching effectiveness, and student achievement. (Lance, Welborn, & Hamilton-Pennell 1993; Krashen 1993; Didier 1984).

National guidelines state,

- “All students, teachers and administrators in each school building at all grade levels must have access to a library media program provided by one or more certificated library media specialist working full-time in the school’s library media center.
- Both professional personnel and support staff are necessary for all library media programs at all grade levels.
- More than one library media professional is required in many schools. “(AASL 57)

Every student and teacher should have access to information resources and services at the

“point-of-need” which implies that the school library media center is accessible and staffed with certified personnel all day every day. Many schools may require more than one certified person in addition to paraprofessional and/or clerical level support. The demands of technology integration, network management, production by both students and faculty, cooperative planning, and extended service hours are examples of variables which may make additional staffing necessary. As members of the community become more information dependent, it is prudent for school districts to explore the feasibility of providing services and staff beyond the school day and beyond the school year.

“The size of a library media center’s staff and collection is the best school predictor of academic achievement.” (Lance 92)

Every teacher and student should have the support of library media personnel who can extend, enhance, and enrich opportunities to teach and to learn. Staffing is addressed in the MSIP Indicator 10.1B1: “Each LMC is open and staffed for student and faculty use during school hours and before and after school.”



A district that makes a commitment to educational excellence will exceed the standards listed in the MSIP Table below. *These minimum personnel standards must be exceeded if schools are to provide the type of program proposed in this guide.*

**The Missouri School Improvement Program Standards
for certified personnel are:**

MINIMUM		DESIRABLE	
<u># STUDENTS</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>#STUDENTS</u>	<u>FTE</u>
1-200	.20	1-150	.20
201-400	.40	151-300	.40
401-600	.60	301-450	.60
601-800	.80	451-600	.80
801-1000	1.00	601-750	1.00
1001-1200	1.20	751-900	1.20
1201-1400	1.40	901-1050	1.40
1401-1600	1.60	1051-1200	1.60
1601-1800	1.80	1201-1350	1.80
1801-2000	2.00	1351-1500	2.00

Continue the pattern if you have more students.

.20 = The equivalent of 1 day per week.

CERTIFICATION

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) offers one certification for school library media specialists. A School Library Media Specialist, K-12 must have a Missouri teaching certificate, two years of teaching experience, a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4-point scale in their subject areas, and must have successfully completed the following courses:

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Semester</u> <u>Hours</u>
Introductory Seminar	1
Library Media Administration	3
Selection and Acquisition	3
Cataloging	3
Reference	3
Materials Production	3
Children's or Adolescent Literature	2
Information Technologies	3
Utilization and Integration	3
Practicum	2
Total	26

Depending upon the recency of teacher certification and other course work, individuals may be required to take additional education courses before the School Library Media Specialist K-12 certification is issued. Two such required courses are:

Reading in the Content Areas	2 hours
Education of the Exceptional Child	3 hours

Additionally, all out-of-state teachers requesting Missouri certification are required to take the National Teachers Exam in their certified teaching area. Colleges and universities with certification programs may have additional course requirements.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Changes in education require continual change in the library media program. The nature of the library media specialist's job will continue to change in response to the information explosion. Job descriptions for library media specialists will also change. The library media specialist's charge is the support of information and technology literacy throughout the curriculum. This necessitates increases in the instructional and leadership roles.

Ideally, each building will have at least one full-time certified library media specialist as recommended in the national guidelines. Paraprofessionals and/or clerical staff are also needed to serve students, teachers, administrators, and community users. A variety of staffing patterns, however, may exist among school library media centers. A combination of professional, paraprofessional, and clerical staff allows flexibility for responsibilities and scheduling. Adequate staffing ensures that access to the library media center will not be jeopardized if the professional teaches a class in the classroom, attends a conference, or helps individuals integrate technology into a classroom presentation. Thought and planning must be given to staffing to provide access for all. Primarily, the number and levels of personnel depend upon enrollment, number of faculty members, mission of the school and library media center, size and design of the library media center, programs, services, and other variables.

All personnel in the library media center, certified, noncertified, and volunteer, must be aware of the ethical and legal issues and procedures of the library media center, and the roles as defined in written job descriptions. Position descriptions reflect the expectations within the local unit and vary considerably from school to school and district to district. Job

descriptions frequently serve as the foundation upon which personnel are evaluated and rewarded. Therefore, job descriptions must be written and reviewed regularly and revised as is warranted by state mandates and local policies and directives. (See sample job descriptions in Appendix D)

■ **Certified Personnel**

Professional level personnel are those individuals who are certified by the state and to

whom responsibility for the management of the library media center is delegated by virtue of contractual agreement.

Although professional personnel have the responsibility to see that information and technology literacy competencies are integrated into the curriculum, the school library media specialist should not be assigned classroom instruction responsibility on a regular basis or scheduled to accommodate planning/release time mandated for classroom teachers.

In order to fulfill their responsibilities, professional level personnel:

- develop and maintain a close working relationship with the district's technology coordinator;
- develop budgets and manage financial records;
- develop, maintain, evaluate, and provide access to collections of resources that enhance teaching and learning;
- collaborate with classroom teachers to design, implement, and evaluate instructional units;
- design curriculum and teach, or help teach, information literacy competencies;
- train, supervise, and evaluate noncertified library media personnel in library media center routines and in legal and ethical issues;
- design and implement inservice programming activities;
- provide leadership to enable innovative teaching and learning strategies;
- plan, develop, and implement the mission, goals, and policies;
- maintain a pleasant, safe, learning and teaching environment;
- develop and maintain efficient, systematic processes for collecting, organizing, and disseminating information;
- develop and maintain public relations programs;
- participate in professional growth experiences such as local, state, and national conferences, workshops, seminars, formal classes, and committees;
- submit written reports to appropriate administrative personnel including activities, progress, statistical data, and needs;
- recruit and train adult and student volunteers.
- promote the use of technology as an information resource;
- train students and teachers in the effective use of technology;
- serve on building level and district-wide technology and curriculum committees; and
- instruct students to be discerning, responsible, and ethical users of information.

AASL Appropriate Staffing

■ Paraprofessional Personnel

Paraprofessional personnel include those individuals who have taken at least 12 hours of school librarianship/media technology courses or, optionally, 9 hours of such course work and three years work experience in a school library media center. Paraprofessional staff members may be assigned a wide range of responsibilities depending upon their education, work experience, and technical expertise.

Working under the direction of a certified library media specialist, paraprofessional responsibilities may include but are not limited to:

- managing circulation activities;
- developing bibliographies;
- helping inventory collections;
- helping students retrieve and use information;
- implementing public relations activities;
- troubleshooting equipment and software problems;
- telling stories, reading to groups, giving book talks, and facilitating other reading/learning motivation activities;
- maintaining systems for record keeping;
- scheduling library media activities, facilities, and services;
- processing interlibrary loan and borrowing activities;
- assisting students and teachers in the production of teaching/learning materials;
- loading records into an electronic catalog database;
- maintaining building or district level catalog systems;
- repairing and maintaining equipment,
- managing and troubleshooting network systems; and
- helping write technical specifications for equipment systems.

Each paraprofessional position should be defined with a job description that uniquely characterizes that role and lists the responsibilities of the incumbent in the position.

■ Clerical Personnel

Clerical personnel, skilled in office routines, are typically assigned to:

- answer telephone and relay messages to appropriate persons;
- maintain files in print and electronic formats;
- design and construct bulletin boards and other displays;
- process materials for the collection;
- schedule and deliver equipment and materials;
- expedite orders for materials and check incoming orders;
- shelve materials and read shelves;
- make off-air tapes and other duplicates when appropriate; and
- check in mail.

■ Technician and Technology Coordinator

Technicians and technology coordinators may or may not be a part of the library media center staff but should work closely with the library media specialist in helping ensure access to equipment and networks which facilitate research and teaching. It is desirable that the library media specialist develop a close working relationship with the district's technology coordinator.

■ **District Level Coordinator/Supervisor**

Although Missouri has no certification requirements for district level personnel beyond that of the building level school library media specialist, it is recommended that the person in that position will have at least a Master's Degree in library science or media technology and work experience as a library media specialist at the building level. Although the job description reflects the mission of the district and local expectations, district level coordinator tasks are listed in the box.

District level coordinator/supervisors:

- recruit and recommend building level certified, noncertified, and volunteer personnel;
- act as a liaison between building level personnel, superintendents, and the school board;
- act as a liaison between building level personnel and community/business partners;
- provide leadership for district library media programs;
- coordinate in-service programs for professional development;
- mentor recently hired certified personnel;
- seek and administer grants from government agencies and private foundations;
- work with architects and building level personnel in planning new or remodeled facilities;
- communicate and share information with other district's library directors;
- communicate in a timely and relevant fashion with immediate supervisors and building level personnel;
- help building level personnel establish a climate conducive to learning and teaching;
- advocate for resources, services, and programming that enhance learning opportunities; and
- participate in local, state, and national professional library media and educational organizations.

[INSERT AASL school library media superv.
here]

■ Volunteer Personnel

Adult and student volunteers frequently help in library media centers or at the district level. Volunteers, however, cannot be used to replace certified personnel mandated in the Standards and Indicators Manual, Section 3.1 Professional Support Staff (*Missouri School Improvement Program* 10). Under no circumstances can volunteer personnel be expected to perform the responsibilities of certified personnel.

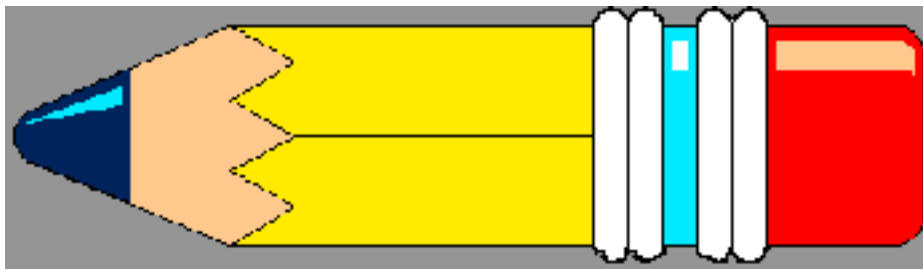
Carefully selected and well trained volunteers can be valuable assets to the library media center, the school, and the district. They can be expected to:

- help with book fairs;
- be aware of copyright and confidentiality constraints;
- shelve resources;
- conduct story time;
- enter data;
- circulate materials,
- design library displays; and
- assist as needed.

The positive public relations benefits derived from volunteers cannot be overlooked in an age in which partnerships are sought, advocacy is needed for legislative agendas, and parental and community support is vital to successfully meet the challenges to public education.

PERSONNEL EVALUATION

The school library media specialist is evaluated on the same schedule as other certified faculty by the building principal and/or the district library media coordinator using a form specifically designed to assess the effectiveness of the library media specialist. To evaluate the library media specialist, the school district may use the personnel evaluation instrument recommended by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, develop an assessment instrument locally, or modify the Performance Based Evaluation matrix (see sample evaluation in Appendix D) to fit the local environment. Other library media personnel should be evaluated according to district policies.



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Further Reading

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